

A SURGICAL INSTRUMENT WITH A LATERAL-MOVING ARTICULATION CONTROL

Abstract of the Invention

An articulating surgical instrument suited for endoscopic use includes a lateral articulation control into a handle portion that provides an intuitive visual and tactile indication to the clinician as to the amount and direction of articulation of an end effector at a distal end of a shaft. Lateral movement of a lateral control actuator is converted into a longitudinal motion or a rotational motion transferred by the shaft to an articulation mechanism. A version of a lateral articulation control for a rotationally driven articulation mechanism incorporates an articulation backdrive lockout that prevents forces on the end effector from causing the selected amount of articulation from being changed.